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June 23, 2005

HAND DELIVER

Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary
Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

Re: The Berkshire Gas Company - D.T.E. 05-43

Dear Secretary Cottrell:


Enclosed please find a copy of the responses of The Berkshire Gas Company to the First Set of Information Requests of the Department of Telecommunications and Energy for filing in the above-referenced proceeding. These responses are also being submitted electronically.

Please call me if you require further assistance with respect to this matter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

BROWN RUDNICK BERLACK ISRAELS LLP

By: 
James M. Avery

JMA/cdw
Enclosure

cc: John J. Geary, Esq., Hearing Officer (w/2 enc via hand delivery)
Sean Hanley, Assistant Director, Rates and Revenue Requirements Division (w/1 enc via hand delivery)
Stephen Crowley, Analyst, Rates and Revenue Requirements Division (w/1 enc via hand delivery)
Mauricio Diaz, Analyst, Rates and Revenue Requirements Division (w/1 enc via hand delivery)
Miguel Maravi, Analyst, Rates and Revenue Requirements Division (w/1 enc via hand delivery)
Karen L. Zink, President, COO and Treasurer (w/enc)
Jennifer M. Boucher, Supervisor - Rate and Planning (w/enc)

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**Department of Telecommunications and Energy
First Set of Information Requests**

**THE BERKSHIRE GAS COMPANY
DTE 05-43**

Witness: Jennifer M. Boucher
Date: June 23, 2005

**Question
DTE 1-1:**

Refer to Supplemental Schedule 2--Weather Normalization at 1-5. How did the Company determine what "billing cycle sales months" to use in the calculation of the base load for each rate class? Are the months used to determine base load stipulated in the performance-based ratemaking plan ("PBR") approved in The Berkshire Gas Company, D.T.E. 01-56? If yes, provide a cite to the appropriate section of the PBR plan.

Response: The months used to determine base load are not specifically stipulated in the PBR plan approved in The Berkshire Gas Company, D.T.E. 01-56 (2002). However, the Company prepared the weather normalization in the same manner as that which was approved in D.T.E. 01-56 and D.T.E. 04-52 that is, utilizing the average of the two summer months with the lowest consecutive sales as its base load for each rate class. For rates R1, R3, R4, G41 and G51, the average of August 2004 and September 2004 were utilized, and for rates R2, G42, G43, G52 and G53, the average of July 2004 and August 2004 were utilized. It is important to note that the weather normalization is for illustrative purposes only as the rate increase is calculated by applying the percentage change in the GDP-PI, less a 1% consumer dividend, to each component of the current delivery rates, not to the weather normalized volumes or revenues.

**Department of Telecommunications and Energy
First Set of Information Requests**

**THE BERKSHIRE GAS COMPANY
DTE 05-43**

Witness: Jennifer M. Boucher
Date: June 23, 2005

**Question
DTE 1-2:**

Refer to Supplemental Schedule 2--Weather Normalization at 1. For rate class R-2, please explain why the number of billing cycle customers declines in the months of November, December, August, September and October.

Response: Rate class R-2 is the Company's Residential Low-Income Rate for Non-Heating Customers. The Company's tariff requires that the Company provide forms to customers to certify their continuing eligibility or compliance with the requirements for service pursuant to this rate schedule. (See Rate Schedule M.D.T.E. No. 353 "Availability"). In July 2004, in connection with this certification process, the Company reclassified a number of customers that no longer satisfied the tariff's eligibility requirements. The Company expects that the indicated decline is the result of this process.

**Department of Telecommunications and Energy
First Set of Information Requests**

**THE BERKSHIRE GAS COMPANY
DTE 05-43**

Witness: Jennifer M. Boucher
Date: June 23, 2005

Question

DTE 1-3: Refer to Supplemental Schedule 2--Weather Normalization. Please explain in detail, using data, calculations and assumptions, how the Company computed its weather normalization adjustment.

Response: For each rate class, the Company determined the base load sales as described in the response to Information Request DTE 1-1. Then, the base load was subtracted from the billing cycle sales to derive the heating, or temperature sensitive, load. Next, the temperature departure from normal was determined by subtracting actual heating degree-days from normal heating degree-days. Next, to arrive at the actual unit heat load per degree-day, the heating load is divided by the actual heating degree-days. This actual unit heat load per degree-day is then multiplied by the temperature departure from normal to derive the weather adjustment sales volume. Finally, weather adjustment sales volume is multiplied by the weighted delivery rate to derive the revenue weather adjustment. As stated in the response to Information Request DTE 1-1, the weather normalization is for illustrative purposes only as it is not used in calculating the rate increase.